LAND'S END TO JOHN O'GROATS - £2,250

4th September 2020 - 23rd September 2020 (20 days)
The route used makes good use of quiet and scenic roads wherever possible and the tour is aimed at the fitter cycle-tourist or Audax rider who can cope with the many hills in Cornwall, Devon and the Peak District. Having said that, this challenging ride has been completed by riders in their seventies - their method being to start a bit early, maintain a steady speed and keep the stops to a minimum. The tour is not suitable for the inexperienced and we will be asking that tour members have recently completed at least 80 miles in a day (average day is 65 miles). The hire of a Garmin GPS is included in the tour price.
The route uses mostly rural roads and offers plenty of beautiful scenery. The first four days can be tough, but things do get easier, with a rest day before the final Scottish hills. Succeed in this challenge and you will have some wonderful memories to treasure.

HOLIDAY TYPE: Guided
TOUR MANAGER: Chris Ellison
GRADE: Challenging
BOOKING STATUS: Places Available
ACCOMMODATION: Hotel
BOARD BASIS: Half Board
TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS: Land Only
ROAD / OFF ROAD: Road
HOLIDAY STYLE: Moving-on
VEHICLE SUPPORT: Full Vehicle Support
HOLIDAY REF NO: 03413

Holiday Itinerary

Friday 4th September
Luggage pick up at Penzance train station from 1230 to 1600. Cycle to Land's End or The Lizard Peninsula (depending on weather etc) and back to the hotel in Penzance. Dinner at 1930. Stay 2 nights. Meals: D

Saturday 5th September
Cycle to Land's End or The Lizard Peninsula and back by a scenic or a direct route. Meals: B D

Sunday 6th September
Cycle to Lostwithiel via the King Harry chain ferry across the River Fal and the tall ships harbour at Jamestown, through Cornwall's rolling landscape. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Monday 7th September
Cycle over the Tamar into Devon, then through Tavistock and over eerie Dartmoor with its tors and infamous Jail to Exeter with its famous cathedral. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Tuesday 8th September
Cycle via the edge of the Blackdown Hills and Somerset Levels, in some places several feet below sea level, to the old fashioned seaside resort of Weston-super-Mare. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Wednesday 9th September
Cycle around the edge of Bristol over the Avon and old Severn bridge cycle paths to medieval Chepstow for lunch and through Welsh border country, past Symonds Yat World Heritage Site to Ross-on-Wye. Stay 1 night. Meals: B

Thursday 10th September
Cycle through the 'Black & White' country to Leominster and ancient Ludlow (with a coffee stop in front of the castle) and Corvedale, touching Wenlock Edge and Much Wenlock, descending into Coalbrookdale and going over the famous Iron Bridge (another World Heritage Site) to Shifnal, near Telford. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Friday 11th September
Cycle via gently rolling countryside to Stone and then the high Staffordshire Peak District and the Manifold Trail to Hulme End, on to Hartington before going past Arbour Low's stone circle and descending gently to the market town of Bakewell in Derbyshire’s Peak District. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Saturday 12th September
Cycle through the lovely White Peak and then the Dark Peak, past Ladybower Reservoir and over the hilly 'Strines' backroad (used by the Tour de France and Tour of Yorkshire) to Holmfirth and then Outlane, near Huddersfield. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Sunday 13th September
Cycle the high Pennine moorland with its windfarms and stunning views to Haworth (Bronte country), the tourist town of Skipton and into the Yorkshire Dales, going up Wharfedale and over Fleet Moss into Wensleydale to Hawes. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Monday 14th September
Cycle via Kirkby Stephen and Appleby up the beautiful Eden Valley with its distinctive Scandinavian place names, tiny Norman castle and red squirrels, to the edge of Carlisle. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Tuesday 15th September
Cycle into Scotland via historic Gretna Green to Abington on very scenic backroads via Annan and Wanlockhead (the highest village in Scotland) or the easier but jarring old main road with its poorly patched tarmac and the biggest windfarm in Scotland. Stay 1 night. Meals: B

Wednesday 16th September
Cycle through the rich farming countryside of the Scottish Lowlands and then the post industrial moorlands between Glasgow and Edinburgh with their abandoned waste heaps and quarries to the famous Falkirk Wheel and Stirling with its Castle. Stay 2 nights. Meals: B D

Thursday 17th September
Rest day, with the opportunity to visit Stirling Castle, do bike maintenance or clothes washing (there is a good bike shop and a laundry nearby). Meals: B D

Friday 18th September
Cycle via Crieff with its cafes, then the almost perfect Sma Glen with its stags and Glen Cochill to Aberfeldy, then alongside the famous River Tay, renowned for its salmon fishing and on to Pitlochry. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Saturday 19th September
Cycle via the Sustrans cycle route up spectacular Glen Garry and the Pass of Drumochter through Dalwhinnie with its distillery, on delightful backroads to the edge of Aviemore and on past Bridge of Garten to Nethybridge. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Sunday 20th September
Cycle to Carbridge with its rather alarming old bridge next to the new bridge and on to Tomatin. Continue via Inverness's excellent Velocity Cafe and the suspension bridge over the Beauty and Moray Firth. Cross the Black Isle and alongside Cromarty Firth with its oil rigs and exploration platforms to Tain. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Monday 21st September
Cycle via enchanting Strath Tirry and Strath Vagastie across the Flow Country with its distant mountains (including the most northerly Munroe, Ben Hope), many small and large lochs and north coast. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Tuesday 22nd September
Cycle the northern coast of Scotland with great views of the Orkney islands, including the Old Man of Hoy (if visibility is good) and then past Dounreay, Thurso (possible diversion to Dunnet Head, the most northerly point on the UK mainland) and on to John O’Groats. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Wednesday 23rd September
Bus to Inverness, arriving 1215. Drop off at the train station, car hire or airport. Meals: B

Mileage: 50 to 83 miles per day; average 63 miles. Meals: B = Breakfast  D = Dinner.

Holiday Summary

Accommodation & Meals
This will be mostly in 3-star hotels, apart from two nights rated 4-star and two nights rated 2-star. Single occupancy is no longer available. Most rooms will be en-suite but this cannot be guaranteed on two nights. Breakfast is included and dinner except on two nights (9th & 15th). Vegetarians should indicate
their preferences on the booking form but may have very limited choice in some places.

Vehicle Support
A back-up van will carry your luggage and will give support to the group during the day.

Travel Insurance
Obtaining travel insurance is optional for UK residents as your Cycling UK membership provides third party cover. However, this does not cover any other risks such as cancellation charges, personal injury or lost property. We strongly recommend that suitable insurance is taken out to safeguard against such risks **as soon as you book** so you will then be covered if you have to cancel due to injury or illness **before** the tour starts. Note that it is possible to obtain insurance that will cover a partner or friend cancelling when the other partner or friend is injured or ill. Members who do not reside in the UK are not covered for third party and are advised to obtain suitable cover before leaving their normal residence. If you already have an annual policy, you may need to confirm that it will cover a UK holiday or make provision for it to do so.

Price
The price of £2,250 is based on a minimum number of 8 people taking part in the holiday; please note Booking Conditions, clause 3. If there are insufficient bookings by 26th June 2020, we will contact you and return all monies paid.

Price Includes
- Transfer by bus from John O'Groats to Inverness
- Back-up vehicle to carry luggage / people where necessary
- 19 nights hotel, sharing room
- 19 breakfasts, 17 dinners
- Hire of a Garmin GPS and bike mount
- CTC Cycling Holidays & Tours costs

Price Does Not Include
- Travel to Land's End and from Inverness
- Drinks with dinner
- Lunches or refreshments during the day
- Entry fees at any attractions visited
- Any other personal expenses
- Travel Insurance
- Single occupancy supplement (this is no longer available)

Payment Schedule
A deposit of £450 per person is payable upon booking, with an Interim Payment of £900 per person due by 7th March 2020. The final balance of £900 per person is to be paid ten weeks prior to departure, by 26th June 2020.

Cancellations
Should you be forced to cancel your booking for any reason you must notify us in writing. Cancellation charges are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written notice received:</th>
<th>Cancellation charge:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 7th March 2020</td>
<td>Deposit (£450)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th March 2020 to 25th June 2020</td>
<td>60.0% (£1,350)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26th June 2020 through to departure</td>
<td>100% (£2,250)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Information**

**Area Covered By The Holiday**
The UK mainland contains an amazing variety of scenery in a relatively small area and a useful network of country lanes and minor roads. To help us on this 1000+ mile ride the prevailing wind is from the southwest and the weather is usually reasonable at this time of year.

In the first section you will experience the remote hills and Levels before crossing the high-tech Avon and old Severn bridge cycle paths into the Welsh border country and Ross-on-Wye. From here we cycle north through Ludlow and Corve Dale towards Telford before turning northeast and cycling through the Manifold Valley into the Derbyshire Peak District.

Heading more or less north and staying on the high ground of the Pennines, we cross Monsal Head and the Strines and cycle through moorland to Haworth (Bronte country) and into the Yorkshire Dales before emerging in the Eden Valley and stopping near Carlisle.

Cycle into Scotland via Gretna Green to Wanlockhead, the highest village in Scotland, before cycling through the Scottish Lowlands to Stirling where we enjoy a rest day. From here we cycle via Glen Garry and the Pass of Drumochter to Nethybridge. Continue via Inverness and the Black Isle to Tain from where the route goes via Strath Tirry and Strath Vagastie to Tongue and Bettyhill, for a final push along the northern coast to John O’Groats.

**Rides & Rest Days**
Most of each day will be spent cycling. Typically people will cycle in loose groups of three or four, around 12-14mph on the flat, slower up hills, usually meeting up at road junctions and cafes for lunch and refreshment breaks.

The Tour Manager normally ‘leads’ from behind, driving the support vehicle, which will set off after you have set out and repeatedly leapfrog you during the day. There might also be a deputy leader riding but please do not expect to be constantly accompanied. In practise we should always be fairly close if you need us, and you should see or meet us several times during the day.

Inevitably, many parts of this route are very hilly, so you do need to be fit to get the most out of this tour, and it is essential to get out on your bike and
build up to 70 or 80 mile hilly rides before the tour starts. 100km or 200km Audax rides are good training for this sort of tour. See [http://www.aukweb.net](http://www.aukweb.net) for details.

**Please note**: it may not always be possible to follow the itinerary exactly; things do not always go as planned. In these circumstances, we will make alternative arrangements.

### Accommodation & Meals

Accommodation will range from 2- to 4-star hotels of varying size and age. Several of the hotels have considerable character. One English hotel was stayed in by Jane Austin and one Scottish hotel was used regularly by Robbie Burns. Meals, where provided, tend to be three course, wholesome and filling.

### Travel

We recommend that you travel to Penzance by rail or car; nearly all trains carry cycles, but they can be busy. One-way hire cars can be cheaper and more convenient, with a drop off point for the major hire firms in the station car park. The van will be at Penzance train station from about 1230 to 1600 to transport any luggage. Parcelforce and other couriers have in the past shipped bikes to the first hotel for tour members.

At John O'Groats we have arranged a bus for 0830 on the final morning, returning you and your bike to Inverness by about 1200. It is possible to have your bike shipped home from John O'Groats, see [http://www.johnogroatsbiketransport.co.uk/bike-couriering.php](http://www.johnogroatsbiketransport.co.uk/bike-couriering.php). Previous tour members have used them with good results.

### Group Information

The maximum group size will be 20 excluding the Tour Manager(s).

### Weather & Clothing

As you may know, British weather can be very variable, so there is a possibility of both heat waves and cold, wet weather on a tour like this. Lightweight clothing, suitable for a range of temperatures, is needed and possibly smarter clothing for the more up-market hotels (though they seem to be very relaxed about what people wear). Lightweight waterproofs/windproofs may be useful and also warmer clothing for the evenings. Hopefully sun cream will also be useful. Three or four of the hotels have swimming pools or spa facilities so you might want to bring swimming costumes.

### Cycles & Equipment

A lightweight road bike or touring cycle with low gears (eg a small chainring the same size or smaller than the largest cog on your rear wheel) is recommended. On a ride of this length a weight saving of even a couple of pounds (a kilogram) can make a big difference. Your bike must be in good working order, especially the brakes; spare brake pads must be carried. Lights and mudguards are optional. You should have ridden your cycle before the tour to ensure you are happy with its handling. You are expected to carry tools and spares to deal with punctures and minor repairs, including two new inner tubes. There are local bike shops on or near the route, but they might not be available when you want them.

### Maps & Guides

The hire of a Garmin GPS and bike mount is included in the tour price, as it makes navigation much easier. You will need space on your handlebars for the Garmin. If you wish to bring your own maps some tour members have found that ripping pages from an atlas as needed is the cheapest option.

### Travel Insurance & Advice

Although medical care and repatriations aren't really big issues for a UK tour, cancellation can be, so please take note of what is said about insurance in the Holiday Summary. If you should have to cancel due to illness or an accident, the cancellation schedule shows what you will stand to lose at each point in time. Travel insurance, **taken out at the time of booking**, would normally cover this.

### Tour Manager's Contact Details

If you require any assistance, or have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact the Tour Manager using the information provided below.

**Chris Ellison**

**Email**: chris@halchemy.com

**Mobile**: 07967 584409